

BIBLE-CLASS ESSAY.

ARE WE TO MURMUR AGAINST ALMIGHTY GOD BECAUSE WE ARE NATURALLY PRONE TO EVIL?

WHEN Adam fell from the holy state in which he was created, his will and desires became opposed to the will of his Creator, in whose image he was made. And in consequence of his transgression all are by nature alienated from God, for all inherit the sin and curse of Adam. If we attempt to rescue ourselves from this fallen state, we will be led to think hard thoughts of God because He has created us with a proneness to evil. And if left in this condition, well might we cry out with St. Paul "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." But if we consider the means God has provided for our recovery, we will find abundant cause to say with the Apostle "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Man's sinfulness has furnished to God an occasion of manifesting His infinite love and mercy in sending His own Son to take upon Him our nature, and to suffer in our stead the consequences of sin. He came that we might have life, and lovingly calls all to the means of grace He has ordained in His church, whereby he may incarnate Himself in each one of us. And are we to murmur because we are generated in sin, when it is our great privilege to become regenerated in holy baptism, and thus cleansed from our sin, and our bodies made temples of the Holy Ghost.

But this seed of spiritual life in the soul can not grow except it abide in the Vine. "The flesh lusteth

against the Spirit," and we are of our own nature still inclined to evil. Christ knows our weaknesses, and feeds us with His Body and Blood in the sacrament of the altar that He may strengthen our souls and develop our weak natures into the likeness of His nature. Had we not fallen in the first Adam, we could not know the wondrous love of God in thus restoring us in the second Adam. Instead of murmuring because of our evil inclinations, let us heartily thank the Lord, our Righteousness, that He has created us for His glory, and that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. The tempter's power should not cast us down when we can have always by our side One who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin," and who will at last reward His faithful followers by bringing them to a paradise far better than that from which Adam was expelled,—for temptation cannot enter this blest abode where the departed "rest from their labors," and are awaiting the Resurrection of the body, when they shall be gathered in the church triumphant to sing through all eternity the praises of the Lamb of God, in whose Blood they have washed their robes and made them white.

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It is stated that the Ven. William Lefroy, Archdeacon of Warrington, who has been appointed to the deanery of Norwich, started life as a compositor in Dublin, and was subsequently sub-editor of the *Irish Times*.

A hatred of past misdoings is the first step towards true repentance, for we cannot wish undone what we do not hate.